

In the Claims: (strikethrough parts deleted and underlined parts added)

1. (Currently Amended) A sliding quick attach system, comprising:
~~a support frame having a lower edge;~~
~~an elongate at least one~~ catch member attached to said support frame substantially parallel to said lower edge;
at least one latch structure attached to said support frame;
an implement unit having an upper lip and a lower lip, wherein said upper lip removably and slidably engages said catch member; and
~~at least one slot within said lower lip, wherein said slot extends longitudinally within said lower lip and wherein said slot slidably and substantially transversely receives a locking pin from said latch structure for allowing said implement unit to move side-to-side with respect to said support frame.~~
2. (Original) The sliding quick attach system of Claim 1, wherein said slot extends at least along fifty-percent of the length of said lower lip.
3. (Original) The sliding quick attach system of Claim 1, wherein said upper lip is comprised of a hook structure.
4. (Original) The sliding quick attach system of Claim 1, including a first brace and a second brace extending between said support frame and said catch member.
5. (Original) The sliding quick attach system of Claim 1, wherein said locking pin includes a tapered portion.
6. (Original) The sliding quick attach system of Claim 1, wherein said locking pin has a rectangular cross section.

7. (Original) The sliding quick attach system of Claim 6, wherein said locking pin has a width slightly smaller than a width of said slot.

8. (Original) The sliding quick attach system of Claim 1, wherein said catch member is comprised of a rod structure.

9. (Original) The sliding quick attach system of Claim 1, wherein said latch structure includes a lever member attached to said locking pin for manipulating said locking pin.

10. (Original) The sliding quick attach system of Claim 9, wherein said latch structure includes an engaging portion for securing said lever member in a locked position and a bias member in contact with said lever member for retaining said lever member within said engaging portion.

11. (Currently Amended) A sliding quick attach system, comprising:
~~a support frame having a lower edge;~~
~~an elongate at least one~~ catch member attached to said support frame substantially parallel to ~~said lower edge~~;
at least one latch structure attached to said support frame;
an implement unit having an upper lip and a lower lip, wherein said upper lip removably and slidably engages said catch member;
at least one slot within said lower lip, wherein said slot extends longitudinally within said lower lip and wherein said slot slidably and substantially transversely receives a locking pin from said latch structure for allowing said implement unit to move side-to-side with respect to said support frame; and
an actuator unit attached between said support frame and said implement unit for applying a side-to-side force to said implement unit.

12. (Original) The sliding quick attach system of Claim 11, wherein said slot extends at least along fifty-percent of the length of said lower lip.

13. (Original) The sliding quick attach system of Claim 11, wherein said upper lip is comprised of a hook structure.

14. (Original) The sliding quick attach system of Claim 11, including a first brace and a second brace extending between said support frame and said catch member.

15. (Original) The sliding quick attach system of Claim 11, wherein said locking pin includes a tapered portion.

16. (Original) The sliding quick attach system of Claim 11, wherein said locking pin has a rectangular cross section.

17. (Original) The sliding quick attach system of Claim 16, wherein said locking pin has a width slightly smaller than a width of said slot.

18. (Original) The sliding quick attach system of Claim 11, wherein said catch member is comprised of a rod structure.

19. (Original) The sliding quick attach system of Claim 11, wherein said latch structure includes a lever member attached to said locking pin for manipulating said locking pin.

20. (Original) The sliding quick attach system of Claim 19, wherein said latch structure includes an engaging portion for securing said lever member in a locked position and a bias member in contact with said lever member for retaining said lever member within said engaging portion.

C. APPLICANT'S COMMENTS

i. Overview

Claims 1-20 are pending in this Application with Claims 1, 11 being amended. No new matter is added by way of these amendments, and the amendments are supported throughout the Specification and the drawings. Reconsideration of Claims 1-20 is respectfully requested. The Examiner's rejections will be considered in the order of their occurrence in the Official Action.

The Official Action rejected as-filed Claims 1-20 under 35 U.S.C. §102(b) as being anticipated by Burton (U.S. Patent No. 5,692,855). The Applicant respectfully disagrees with this rejection particularly in view of the amendments made to the claims.

It is important to first briefly discuss 35 U.S.C. §102 and its application to the present application. Under section 102(b), anticipation requires that the prior art reference disclose, either expressly or under the principles of inherency, every limitation of the claim.

“A claim is anticipated only if each and every element as set forth in the claim is found, either expressly or inherently described, in a single prior art reference.” *Verdegaal Bros. v. Union Oil Co. of California*, 814 F.2d 628, 631, 2 USPQ2d 1051, 1053 (Fed. Cir. 1987). “The identical invention must be shown in as complete detail as is contained in the ... claim.” *Richardson v. Suzuki Motor Co.*, 868 F.2d 1226, 1236, 9 USPQ2d 1913, 1920 (Fed. Cir. 1989).

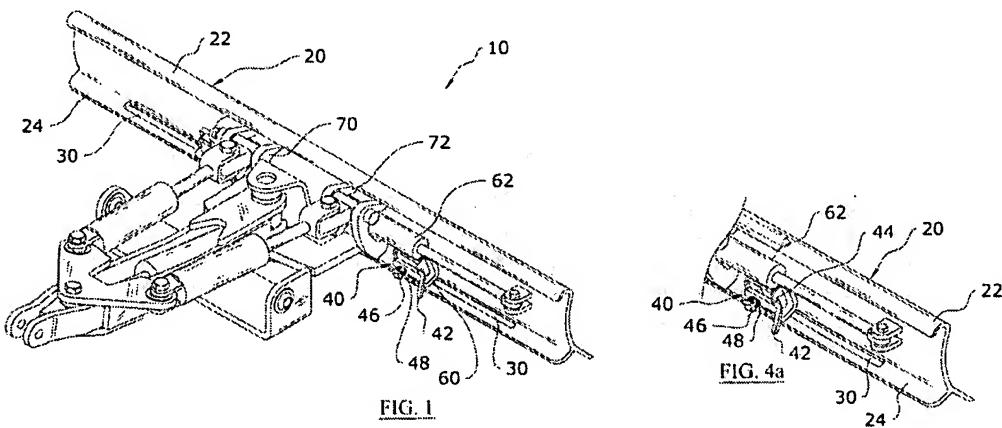
Under 35 U.S.C. §102, anticipation requires that each and every element of the claimed invention be disclosed in the prior art. In addition, the prior art reference must be enabling, thus placing the allegedly disclosed matter in the possession of the public. *Akzo N.V. v. United States Int'l Trade Comm'n*, 1 USPQ 2d 1241, 1245 (Fed. Cir. 1986), cert. denied, 482 U.S. 909 (1987) (emphasis added). Anticipation requires the

disclosure in a single prior art reference of each element of the claim under consideration. *W.L. Gore & Assocs. v. Garlock, Inc.*, 220 USPQ 303, 313 (Fed. Cir. 1983), cert. denied, 469 U.S. 851 (1984). Anticipation requires the presence in a single prior art reference disclosure of each and every element of the claimed invention, arranged as in the claim. *Lindemann Maschinenfabrik GmbH v. American Hoist & Derrick Co.*, 221 USPQ 481, 485 (Fed. Cir. 1984).

ii. Independent Claims 1 and 11

Independent Claim 1 (amended) has the following features (see figures below):

1. (Currently Amended) A sliding quick attach system, comprising:
a support frame;
at least one catch member attached to said support frame;
at least one latch structure attached to said support frame;
an implement unit having an upper lip (22) and a lower lip (24),
wherein said upper lip removably and slidably engages said catch member; and
at least one slot (30) within said lower lip, wherein said slot extends longitudinally within said lower lip and wherein said slot slidably and substantially transversely receives a locking pin (50)
from said latch structure for allowing said implement unit to move side-to-side with respect to said support frame.



Figures 1 and 4a of Present Application

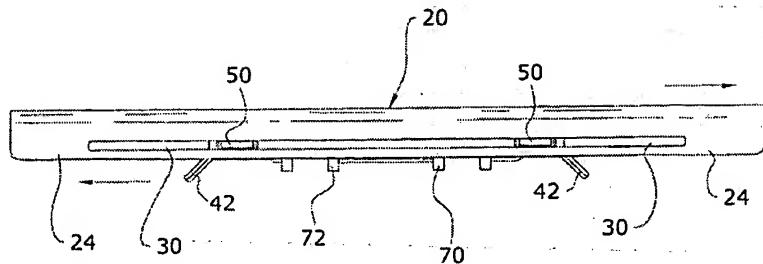


FIG. 6

Figure 6 of Present Application

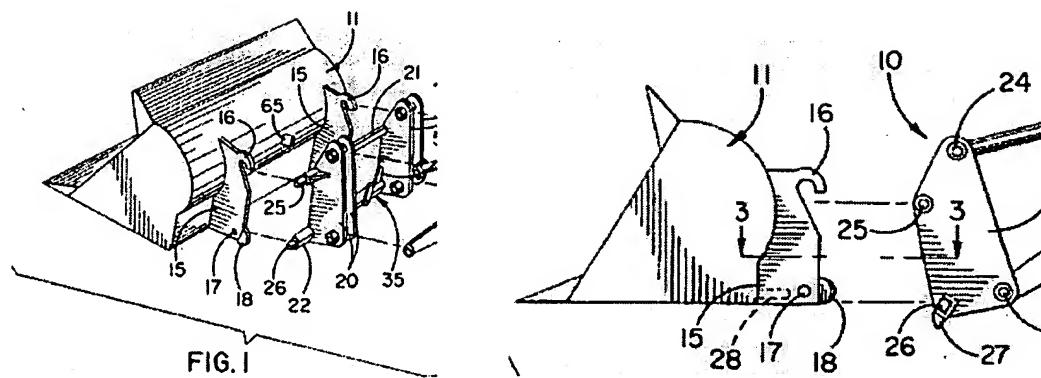
Independent Claim 11 has the same features as independent Claim 1 with the addition of “*an actuator unit attached between said support frame and said implement unit for applying a side-to-side force to said implement unit.*”

Burton does not disclose or suggest the following features contained within independent Claims 1 and 11:

- “an implement unit having an upper lip”;
- “an implement unit having ... a lower lip”;
- “wherein said upper lip removably and slidably engages said catch member”;
- “at least one slot within said lower lip”;
- “wherein said slot extends longitudinally within said lower lip”;
- “wherein said slot slidably and substantially transversely receives a locking pin from said latch structure for allowing said implement unit to move side-to-side with respect to said support frame.”

iii. Burton Does Not Teach an Upper Lip or a Lower Lip

Burton merely teaches the usage of an “upper hook (16)” – not an “upper lip”. The hook within Burton is comprised of a narrow structure that is capable of attaching to a “pin (25)” in a non-sliding manner. (Figure 1; Column 3, Lines 4-13).



Figures 1 and 2 of U.S. Patent No. 5,692,855

In addition, Burton does not teach or suggest the usage of a "lower lip". Burton merely teaches "two *laterally spaced and generally vertical mounting plates* 15." (Figure 1; Column 2, Lines 50-53).

iv. Burton Does Not Teach an Upper Lip Slidably Engaging a Catch Member

As stated previously, Burton merely teaches the usage of "upper hooks 16" that engage the "pins 25" extending from brackets 20. The upper hooks 16 are not designed nor are they capable of sliding upon the pins 25.

v. ***Burton Does Not Teach a Slot within a Lower Lip***

As stated above, Burton does not teach a “lower lip”. In addition, Burton does not teach or suggest a “slot” within a lower lip. Burton merely teaches the usage of “holes 17” that receive “pins 26” extending from the “coupler 10”. (Figures 1, 5 and 6; Column 3, Lines 13-25). Figures 5 and 6 below clearly show the “hole 17” of Burton (compare to the “slot 30” within Figure 6 of the present application).

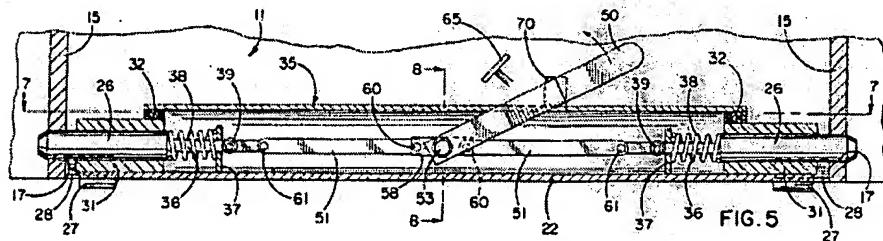


Figure 5 of U.S. Patent No. 5,692,855

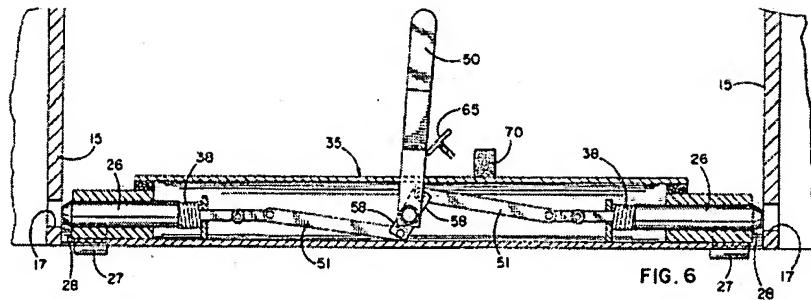


Figure 6 of U.S. Patent No. 5,692,855

The "hole" within the vertical plates 15 of Burton simply is not similar to nor does it provide a similar function/purpose as the "slot" within the lower lip of the present invention. The slot in the present invention allows the implement unit to slide side-to-side without interference. The structure in Burton simply is not capable of side-to-side movement.

vi. Burton Does Not Teach a Slot That Extends Longitudinally

Not only does Burton not teach a lower lip or a slot, but Burton does not teach or suggest a slot that "extends longitudinally within" a lower lip. In fact, Burton merely discloses a "hole 17" that extends transversely through the vertical plates 15 (see Figure 6) which is the opposite of the present invention. This is a significant and important feature of the present invention which allows the implement unit to slide side-to-side without interruption.

vii. Burton Does Not Teach a Side-to-Side Implement Structure

Independent Claims 1 and 11 have the following features:

"wherein said slot slidably and substantially transversely receives a locking pin from said latch structure for allowing said implement unit to move side-to-side with respect to said support frame."

Burton does not allow for side-to-side movement of the implement unit which is an important feature of the present invention. Particularly, Burton does not teach a slot that "slidably and substantially transversely receives a locking pin" from a latch structure